

**Report of the 12th Meeting of the
OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum**

(October 10th 2024, Video Conference, 13.00 İstanbul Time, Virtual Meeting)

1. The 12th Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum was held on October 10, 2024 as a virtual meeting with the theme of “Sustainable Destination Development and Management in OIC Countries”.
2. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Enis UĞUR, Coordinator of Multilateral Relations Branch at the Directorate of EU and Foreign Relations in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey.
3. Approximately 90 public and private sector representatives from Member and Observer States attended the meeting:
4. In addition to the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO), representatives from the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Director of Cappadocia University Social and Strategic Research Center, Competitiveness and Certification Operations Group Manager of Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA), Director a.i. for Europe at UN Tourism, UNDP İstanbul Regional Hub – Regional Technical Specialist and UNDP Türkiye - Inclusive Sustainable Growth Portfolio Manager, representative of Governance and Local Development Division, UNDP Malaysia attended the Meeting.
5. At the outset, Mr. Enis UĞUR, Coordinator of Multilateral Relations Branch at the Directorate of EU and Foreign Relations in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, delivered an opening speech and welcomed the participants to the meeting.
6. In his opening statement, Mr. Can AYGÜL, the Head of the Department at COMCEC at the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO), indicated the importance of the Sustainable Destination Development and Management in OIC Countries where tourism has been a vital issue in recent years. He stated that as one of the youngest and fastest growing branches of tourism, sustainability of the Destination Development and Management would contribute to rural and local communities in OIC Countries.
7. In her opening statement, Ms. Gözde ŞAHİN, Head of Directorate of EU and Foreign Relations, stated that as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Republic of Türkiye, the ministry is aware of the importance of considering environmental, social, and economic factors together in the tourism sector. With this approach, the ministry aims for long-term success in tourism by considering the benefits of both our visitors and local people. In this context; the ministry

attaches importance to strategic planning in the areas of preservation of historical and natural texture, raising awareness of local people about tourism, economic sustainability, destination management and marketing. She also stated that, regarding the issues, the ministry has gain important experience sharing through the collaborations have established between the public, private sector, and non-governmental organizations. At the end of their speech, she indicated that OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum is an effective platform to establish international networks, exchange ideas and knowledge and widen our horizons and sharing of the experiences and learn more about current achievements in OIC region in this specific field of tourism.

8. In his opening statement, Mr. Enis UĞUR, also the Moderator, stressed the importance of the Forum meetings as a platform to exchange the views of public and private sector representatives to be able to identify the potential collaboration areas and the current needs for welfare and development. He expressed that tourism is one of the main cooperation areas of OIC and COMCEC and developing a sustainable, inclusive, and competitive tourism sector in OIC member countries has been among major aims of COMCEC strategy. He stated that the Tourism is one of the most powerful sectors for economic growth, cultural exchange, and international cooperation and in this context the sustainability is very important to preserve and protect these treasures for future generations and for the common shared cultural heritage of humanity. He also indicated that the sustainable destination development is important for balancing tourism growth with the preservation of environment, cultural heritage and locals.

9. Mr. Halil Burak Sakal, Director of Cappadocia University Social and Strategic Research Center made a presentation entitled “Sustainable destination development through innovation and big data: cases from the world and Türkiye” he expressed the importance of tourism in local economies and improvement of social and economic integration he also detailed the interaction in tourism sub-sectors also he gave examples from other countries regarding the sustainability of destination management.

10. Ms. Pınar MUTLU Sustainability, Competitiveness and Certification Operations Group Manager of Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA) made a presentation entitled “Sustainability in Tourism: Türkiye's Journey of Sustainable Tourism Transformation.” She expressed the Sustainable Tourism Program including trainings collaboration between GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council) and Cappadocia University, Bicycle Friendly Accommodation Facilities, Green Experiences including Trekking, Rock climbing, Water sports, Paragliding etc., Sustainable Routes, The Sustainability of Gastronomic Heritage.

11. Ms. Cordula Wohlmuther, Director a.i. for Europe at UN Tourism made a presentation entitled Sustainable Destination Development and Management: the experience of the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories of UN Tourism. She indicated international tourist arrivals and receipts in times of crisis; global economic crisis (2009) and

Covid 19(2020) and recovery of international tourist arrivals annually and by region in the world. She especially emphasized that the world must accelerate action for the sustainable development goals.

12. Ms.Monica Moldovan, Regional Technical Specialist (UNDP İstanbul Regional Hub) and Ms. Pelin Rodoplu, Inclusive Sustainable Growth Portfolio Manager (UNDP Türkiye) made a joint Presentation regarding UNDP Regional and Local Perspectives. In this joint presentation generally UNDP's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 was shared which aims to reflect a holistic approach to sustainable development. In this context; the presentation indicated general information about the following topics: Sustainable Green Tourism and contribute to Sustainable Destinations, Community-Centered Development, Environmental Conservation and Ecosystem Restoration. The 20-Years of Experience of UNDP Türkiye in Sustainable Tourism was indicated in the presentation through sample projects in the field implemented by UNDP Türkiye.

13. Ms. Norhafiza Shafie, Programme Analyst in Inclusive and Sustainable Economy Management Governance and Local Development Division, UNDP Malaysia, made a presentation about a case of Malaysia regarding Sustainable Destination Development and Management in OIC Countries. She made a Situation Analysis (During COVID) and then the UNDP support towards Sustainable Tourism in Malaysia was explained in the presentation. The aim of the sustainable tourism indicated under the following titles; Nature Based Tourism, Ecotourism, and the focus of sustainable tourism studies indicated by generally national programs of Malaysia. Finally, strategies for sustainable tourism defined in the presentation.

14. Mr. Enis UĞUR, the Moderator, concluded the meeting by thanking all the distinguished participants and speakers for their invaluable efforts and contributions. He wrapped up the previous sessions and presented the conclusions.

15. The meeting ended with vote of thanks.